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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully solicited.

Claims 1-10, 12-19 remain in this application. Claims 4, 5, 7-9, 13 and 14 are non-elected, and no generic claim has been allowed. Claims 1, 3, 6, 10, 15, and 16 have been amended.

The withdrawal of the restriction requirement between the species of ceramics and metal/ceramics is noted with appreciation. Claims to both metals and ceramics are accordingly presented herewith.

Claim 17 was previously allowed.

Attention is respectfully invited to the fact that allowed claim 17, each of the previously rejected claims, and new claims 18 and 19 all recite a skin comprising molybdenum disilicide.

The rejection of claims 1-3, 6, 12, 15 and 16 as being anticipated and/or obvious in view of Mano 6,057,030 is respectfully traversed. Mano does not disclose or even remotely suggest the use of a skin comprising molybdenum disilicide. Mano does not disclose a skin with interconnected porosity. The holding that Mano's coating has interconnected porosity is based on the assumption that the Ventilation Resistance data in Tables 2 and 3 was measured by flowing a gas serially through both the coating and the body. This is contrary to the teaching of this reference. It is also inconsistent with the teachings of this reference.

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When the Mano specification introduces the concept of Ventilation Resistace, it is in the context of the body alone. See, for example, Col. 8, Lns. 27-45, where it is stated that:

> "The resulting porous ceramic body has a porous surface ... The apparent porosity of the of the ceramic body is generally about 30% to about 80%, preferably at least 40%, and the ventilation resistance is about 150 KP*s/m or less. ... The measurement of the gas permeability provides an indication that the pores are interconnected with one another." (Emphasis added)

When read in context, it is clear that the interconnected "pores" in the above quote refers only to the pores in the ceramic body, and not to pores in the coating or in some combination of the coating with the body.

Since claims usually tend to be precise in the use of terms, it is of note that in claim 9 of Mano the Ventilation Resistance is identified specifically and only with the body. This is consistent with the above quoted portion of the specification.

Two teachings in Col. 14 of Mano indicate that Ventilation Resistance data reported in Table 2 is derived from the body alone, and does not involve the coating alone or in combination with the body. In Col. 14, Lns. 46-52, it is stated that:

> "The ventilation resistance was determined for each ceramic body by a gas permeability measuring apparatus ... The ventilation resistance and gas permeability provide an indication of the pores in the ceramic body being connected together." (Emphasis added)

If the ventilation resistance was measured by a gas stream flowing serially through both the body and the coating, the reading would be reflective of the body-coating combination, and would reveal nothing about the porosity of the body alone.

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In Col. 14, Lns. 60-62, it is made clear that the measurement is as a result of gas flow through the body alone, and not the coating-body combination. It is stated there that:

> "The fiberboard of Comparative Example 3 did not produce a durable coating even though the fiberboard had a ventilation resistance or gas permeability of 60."

From this teaching it is clear that the data point of "60" in the last column of Table 2 for Ventilation resistance is a measure of the permeability of the ceramic body (the ceramic fiberboard) alone. The other data points in the same row would be measured in the same way so as to be comparable.

It is also clear (Col. 14, Lns. 62-64) that the Ventilation Resistance of the body is measured by Mano in part for the purpose of attempting to find a correlation between the permeability of the body with the durability or adhesion of the coating to the body. Mano concludes that there is no such correlation. In the context of Mano's purpose of trying to find such a correlation, there would be no purpose to measuring the permeability of either the coating or the coating-body combination.

There is no teaching that Mano's coating is or should be porous or that it includes reticulated porosity of any nature. Mano gives glancing mention to what is described as less preferred plasma flame coating (Col. 9, Lns. 52-63), but focuses on other means of coating. The present specification notes (p. 6, Lns. 20-21) that thermal spraying typically results in closed cell porosity. The generation of interconnected porosity requires a deliberate act to produce it. There is no basis for any holding that porosity, much less substantially uniform interconnected porosity, is

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inherent in Mano's coating. You Applicant should not be compelled to conduct research to rebut a non-existent teaching.

The rejection of claims 1-3, 10, 12 and 15-16 as anticipated or obvious in view of Rink 5,746,793 is respectfully traversed. Rink does not disclose or even remotely suggest the use of a skin comprising molybdenum disilicide. It is respectfully submitted that these claims, as well as new claims 18 and 19, are allowable.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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